



NRCS in Missouri

OCTOBER 1, 2005 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2006

Program Highlights

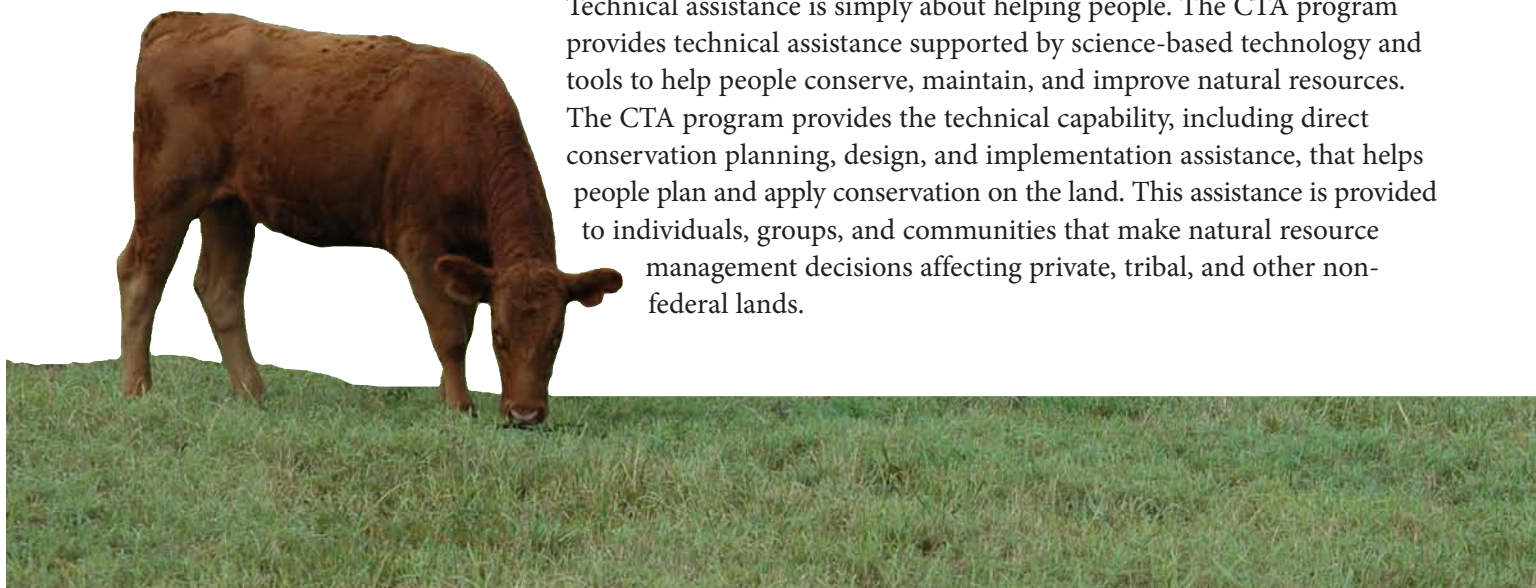
During fiscal year 2006, NRCS and its partners in Missouri helped land users plan conservation systems on more than 1 million acres and apply conservation systems on more than 800,000 acres.

NRCS provided assistance to establish irrigation management systems on 43,333 acres in southeastern Missouri, helped establish prescribed grazing systems on 112,098 acres in the state's grassland areas, assisted with pest management on 79,828 acres, and nutrient management on 98,858 acres. NRCS also helped landowners improve wildlife habitat on 69,800 acres throughout the state.

Missouri's natural resources conservation team also provided technical assistance to install 114 animal waste management systems through the implementation of comprehensive nutrient management plans.

Conservation Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is simply about helping people. The CTA program provides technical assistance supported by science-based technology and tools to help people conserve, maintain, and improve natural resources. The CTA program provides the technical capability, including direct conservation planning, design, and implementation assistance, that helps people plan and apply conservation on the land. This assistance is provided to individuals, groups, and communities that make natural resource management decisions affecting private, tribal, and other non-federal lands.



Helping People Help the Land.



Blong Thao, pictured above with his family, is one of many Hmong farmers in Southwestern Missouri that NRCS has worked with to protect natural resources. Several have used EQIP to construct animal waste storage sheds to improve water quality.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals. EQIP provides financial and technical assistance to install or implement structural and management conservation practices on agricultural land.

In Fiscal Year 2006, Missouri farmers received \$19.7 million in EQIP financial assistance. It funded 1,052 of the 4,865 Missouri EQIP applications. This financial assistance will help install conservation practices that will reduce soil erosion, use water more efficiently, and improve grazing land, wildlife habitat and water quality.

Cooperative Soil Survey Program

In Fiscal Year 2006, the Missouri Cooperative Soil Survey continued to be a leader in updating the initial soil survey information and in delivering this information to the public. The state's partnership continues to be proactive, and is a national leader in both progress and innovation.

Last year, this partnership effort provided customers with updated soils information about 2.1 million acres (about 5 percent of Missouri's land area).

Missouri soils information has been distributed on the Web Soil Survey website: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>, on the National Soil Data Mart, <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov>, and on the state-supported CARES web site: <http://soils.missouri.edu/surveys/soildata.html>.

Current activities are focused on bringing the soils information for the state to a consistent and more accessible format. A state legend for soil symbols has been adopted, resulting in a uniform set of soil symbols that will join across county boundaries.



Conservation Security Program (CSP)

CSP supports ongoing stewardship of private, agricultural lands by providing payments for maintaining and enhancing natural resources. CSP identifies and rewards landowners and farmers who are meeting the highest standards of conservation and environmental management.

During Fiscal Year 2006, Missouri funded 352 of the 551 CSP applications received in the Spring Watershed in Southwestern Missouri. These contracts will provide more than \$47 million over the life of the contracts.

Total CSP payments of over \$22 million were made in the eight watersheds that have been selected to participate in CSP in Missouri.

Plant Materials Program

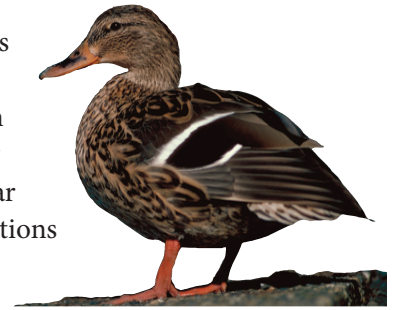
The Elsberry Plant Materials Center (PMC) helps land users, federal, state and local partners, and industry growers in Illinois, Iowa and Missouri protect, conserve and improve natural resources by providing plant materials and plant related technology. The staff researches plants to determine their possible uses in preventing soil erosion, providing wildlife food and cover and in protecting related natural resources. Suitable plants are released from the PMC and made available through nurseries and commercial seed growers.

Three new plants for conservation uses were released in 2006: Refuge Germplasm Big Bluestem; Midwest Premium Germplasm American Plum; and Central Iowa Germplasm Pale Purple Coneflower.

During its 72-year history, the Center has released 83 plants. The retail value of those plants sold in 2006 by private nurseries and commercial seed growers was approximately \$3.5 million.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

WRP helps landowners restore wetlands on agricultural and non-agricultural lands. Restored wetlands provide wildlife habitat for migratory birds, threatened and endangered species and other wetland wildlife. WRP started as a pilot in Missouri in 1992. To date, 787 applications have been funded statewide encompassing 115,583 acres. During Fiscal Year 2006, NRCS enrolled 71 applications covering 6,616 acres.



Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)

FRPP provides an opportunity for USDA to purchase development rights from private landowners to keep productive farmland in agricultural use and to protect historical sites on agricultural land. USDA provides matching funds to organizations with existing farmland protection procedures to help them acquire permanent conservation easements from landowners interested in maintaining their current farming enterprise.

In Fiscal Year 2006, NRCS closed one easement which protects 70 acres adjacent to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield, near Springfield, from development.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

WHIP is designed to maintain ecosystem diversity by improving habitats of reduced or declining wildlife populations within agricultural systems. Missouri obligated more than \$815,000 with 68 contracts during Fiscal Year 2006.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)

GRP offers landowners an opportunity to restore and protect grassland and pastureland rather than converting it to cropland or other uses. In FY 2006, nearly \$1 million in financial assistance was available for drought-affected areas in Missouri. These funds were used to enter into rental agreements with producers to maintain 6,987 acres in grassland for the life of the rental agreement.



Watershed Program (PL-566)

The Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act authorizes NRCS to provide assistance to local organizations in planning and implementing watershed projects.

In Fiscal Year 2006, Missouri's \$4.3 million allotment of PL-566 watershed implementation funds was used to award nine contracts in eight watersheds. The contracts are for constructing 51 floodwater retarding structures.

The East Locust Creek Watershed Plan Revision and Environmental Impact Statement was completed. Implementation of this plan will include constructing a 2,235-acre reservoir to serve as a rural water supply for a 10-county area in north-central Missouri.

Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI)

CCPI targets watersheds of special significance and other geographic areas of environmental sensitivity. It funds projects that focus technical and financial resources on conservation priorities in those areas.

The University of Missouri-Columbia is receiving \$181,426 to complete rapid watershed assessments on four Missouri watersheds: Sac River; South Grand River; Lower Osage River; and the Lower Gasconade River. The assessments will provide initial estimates of where conservation investments would best address the concerns of landowners, conservation districts, and other community organizations and stakeholders. Landowners and leaders can use this information to set local priorities and determine the best actions to achieve their goals.

Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)

The premise of the RC&D program is that local people know what is best for their communities. Because of this, local people create and organize their own RC&D areas, define their own goals, and work with a broad range of public and private entities to achieve their objectives.

Missouri's eight, multi-county RC&D areas completed 157 projects during Fiscal Year 2006. Those activities improved water quality, provided information and education assistance, resolved waste utilization issues, and supported rural tourism. They also benefited fish and wildlife, economic development, forestry, cultural resources, and local natural resources.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

The voluntary Conservation Innovation Grants program is intended to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. CIGs will benefit agricultural producers by providing more options for environmental enhancement and compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.

The curators of the University of Missouri are receiving \$241,440 to demonstrate farm profitability from utilizing management techniques that promote soil and water conservation practices and improve pastures. Missouri is also one of several Midwest states participating in a Carbon Credit Generation Program that is receiving \$750,000 through the Chicago Climate Exchange, Inc. The intent is to develop cost effective procedures to estimate, aggregate, verify and deliver carbon credits to private sector markets.



NRCS
Natural Resources
Conservation Service

Roger A. Hansen
State Conservationist

USDA - NRCS
Missouri
601 Business Loop 70 West,
Suite 250,
Columbia, Missouri 65203
(573) 876-0901
www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov

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